

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0839

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 0832

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, OAU, GB, XA

SUBJ: PRESIDENT BONGO REGRETS LACK OF CONSULTATION ON AFRICAN
MATTERS AND CONTACT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER DURING PRES CARTER'S
AFRICAN TRIP

REF: A) LIBREVILLE 0290, B) LIBREVILLE 0746, C) STATE 56353

D) 77 LIBREVILLE 2895

1. SUMMARY: LIBREVILLE DAILY L'UNION MORNING APRIL 7 CARRIED
EXCERPTS OF TEXT OF INTERVIEW WITH BONGO ON VARIETY OF OAU MATTERS,
EXCERPTS OF WHICH BROADCAST OVER RADIO AND TV EVENING BEFORE. OTHER
ASPECTS BEING REPORTED SEPTEL, BUT BONGO'S RESPONSE TO QUESTION OF
WHETHER HE SATISFIED WITH HIS EXPERIENCE AS PRESIDENT OF OAU LED TO
LENGTHY REPLY THAT INCLUDED MILD BUT POINTED CRITICISM OF ALLEGED
FAILURE OF PRESIDENT CARTER AND NON-AFRICANS TO CONSULT HIM
ON AFRICAN MATTERS. END SUMMARY

2. ASKED BY L'UNION JORNALIST ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE AS OAU PRESI-
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DENT, BONGO REPLIED IN PART BY REFERRING TO "SYSTEMATIC BYPASSING
OF OAU BY SUPER-POWERS IN MATTERS CONCERNING AFRICA." CONTINUING,
HE REFERRED TO INCREASINGLY MARKED TENDENCY TO RESOLVE AFRICAN
PROBLEMS FROM OUTSIDE AFRICA. AFRICAN LIBERATION CONCERNS ALL
AFRICANS AND THEIR ORGANIZATION; HOW THEREFORE TO EXPLAIN NON-
INCLUSION (MISE A L'ECART) OF OAU IN CERTAIN DISCUSSIONS
CONCERNING SOUTHERN AFRICA, PARTICULARLY ZIMBABWE? AMERICANS

AND BRITISH SEEM TO HAVE CONCLUDED THAT APART FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND FRONT LINE STATES, DECOLONIZATION OF ZIMBABWE DOES NOT INTEREST OTHER AFRICAN STATES.

3. ACCORDING BONGO, THIS IS CURIOUS POINT OF VIEW. "AMBASSADOR YOUNG HAS OFTEN VISITED AFRICA DURING MY TERM OF OFFICE, BUT HAS NEVER ATTEMPTED MAKE CONTACT WITH OAU THROUGH ME." BUT THIS IS NOT ESSENTIAL THING - FOR THIS MONTH FOR FIRST TIME IN HISTORY

AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT HAS VISITED OUR CONTINENT. IT WAS AN EVENT FOR ALL AFRICANS. WE SHOULD NOT FORGET THAT AMERICA, NEXT TO NIGERIA, IS "SECOND BLACK NATION IN WORLD." THUS HISTORY AS WELL AS EVENT ITSELF CONFINED ON VISIT "A SPECIAL CHARACTER," THE MORE SO SINCE "JIMMY CARTER'S AMERICA SAYS IT IS READY TO REVISE ITS AFRICAN POLICY IN DIRECTION OF GREATER CONFORMATION TO HISTORY AND PROGRESS."

4. MR. CARTER HAS CHOSEN TO VISIT NIGERIA AND LIBERIA. THESE ARE TWO FRIENDS OF US AND NO ONE WOULD REPROACH HIM FOR HIS CHOICE....IT IS NORMAL....THAT EACH COUNTRY CHOOSE THOSE WITH WHOM THEY WISH HAVE PRIVILEGED RELATIONS. MR MR. CARTER'S TRIP INCLUDED AN IMPORTANT SPEECH ON AMERICAN AFRICAN POLICY "AND, ONE HEARS, DISCUSSIONS ON MAJOR PROBLEMS OF CONTINENT." CERTAIN DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ZIMBABWE WERE INITIATED." "IS IT NORMAL THAT THIS BE DONE OUTSIDE OF OAU? IF HE WANTED TO SHOW HIS INTEREST NOT ONLY FOR HIS AFRICAN CONFIDENTIAL

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FRIENDS, OUGHT PRESIDENT CARTER NOT HAVE MADE A VISIT TO THE CURRENT PRESIDENT OF OAU...? OUR ORGANIZATION HAS A CHARTER. IT VOTES RESOLUTIONS, FIXES OBJECTIVES, REPRESENTS ALL OF AFRICA AND NO ONE OUTSIDE OF AFRICA SHOULD FORGET IT. AND IF WE AFRICANS WANT AFRICA AND ITS ORGANIZATION TO BE RESPECTED, WE MUST RESPECT. NO ONE HAS MONOPOLY SPEAK FOR AFRICA EXCEPT AFRICANS. AND NO ONE IS BETTER PLACED THAN OAU TO BEAR WITNESS TO THEIR ASPIRATIONS."

5. BONGO TELEPHONED ME LATER AFTERNOON OF APRIL 6 TO TELL ME WHAT HE HAD DONE. WHEN I EXPRESSED SOME SURPRISE THAT HE WOULD SAY SOMETHING CRITICAL ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER, HE HASTILY ASSURED ME THAT IT WAS IN HIS CAPACITY AS OAU PRESIDENT, NOT AS PRESIDENT OF BABON. HE THEN REPEATED MUCH OF FOREGOING ADDING FOLLOWING REFINEMENTS:

A. HE WOULD "BOYCOTT" ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN FOR ZIMBABWE IN FAVOR OF PLAN OF HIS OWN (PRESUMABLY ALONG LINES OF FONMIN'S STATEMENT OF MARCH 24 FAVORING INTERNAL SOLUTION - LIBREVILLE 746 NOTAL).

B. HE MUST MAKE REPORT AT KHARTOUM AT END OF HIS PRESIDENCY

AND HE NOT "AU COURANT,"

C. AMBASSADOR YOUNG TAKES VACATIONS IN SENEGAL BUT DOESN'T
COME TO LIBREVILLE TO CONSULT HIM,

D. HE HAS RECEIVED LETTER FROM PRESIDENT NYERERE TELLING
HIM WHAT IS GOING ON,

E. PRESIDENT CARTER SENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY TELEGRAM WHILE
OVERFLYING IVORY COAST, BUT NOTHING TO HIM.

6. HE WAS IN FACT PERFECTLY CALM AND RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO
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MY SUGGESTION THAT I COME AND SEE HIM TO FIND OUT WHAT HE HAD
IN MIND RE PLAN FOR ZIMBABWE, SUGGESTING NEXT WEEK (I WILL,
OF COURSE, FOLLOW UP).

7. COMMENT: BONGO, OF COURSE, WAS DOING CERTAIN AMOUNT OF SHOOTING
FROM HIP INASMUCH AS HE WAS PROVIDED COPIES OF
ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL FOR ZIMBABWE AND PROPOSAL OF FIVE
FOR NAMIBIA. HE WAS ALSO CONSULTED ON POSSIBLE SECURITY COUNCIL
MEETING FOR HORN TO MENTION MOST RECENT "CONSULTATIONS (POINTS
I WILL MAKE WHEN I NEXT SEE HIM). HE HAS NEVER RAISED MATTER
OF PRESIDENT CARTER OR AMB YOUNG COMING TO LIBREVILLE WITH
ME, BUT OBVIOUSLY HAS BEEN FEELING HE WAS BYPASSED AND
FINALLY GOT IT OFF HIS CHEST. IF FOREGOING REPRESENTS ANYTHING,
IT INDICATED HE IS SENSITIVE TO HIS OAU ROLE AND DOES TRY TO
WORK AT IT. WHILE IT TOO SOON TO TELL, I DOUBT ANY GREAT HARM
HAS BEEN DONE, BUT IT DOES SUGGEST THAT WE CONTINUE "CONSULT"
WITH HIM AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE ON AFRICAN MATTERS AT LEAST
WHILE HE REMAINS OAU PRESIDENT. IT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT IF
AMB YOUNG COULD STOP OVER HERE BRIEFLY ON ONE OF HIS AFRICAN
TRIPS, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL. IF DEPARTMENT WISHES ME MAKE ANY
SPECIAL POINTS TO HIM NEXT WEEK, I WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING
THEM BY OPENING OF BUSINESS MONDAY APRIL 10. TIENKEN

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